

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3829

INFO AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMCONSUL BELFAST

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 11794

E.O. 11652: XGDS

TAGS: PINT, PDEV, UK, EI

SUBJECT: NORTHERN IRELAND: WILSON/COSGRAVE MEETING SUCCESSFUL

REF: LONDON 11633

1. PRESS REPORTS SEPTEMBER 11 WILSON/COSGRAVE TALKS WERE CORDIAL AND PRODUCTIVE. IRISH REPORTEDLY REASSURED BY HMG'S REAFFIRMATION OF ITS CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO POWER SHARING BETWEEN PROTESTANT AND CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND TO "IRISH DIMENSION". THE LATTER POINT WILL REPORTEDLY BE SUBJECT OF FURTHER CONSULTATION BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS AND ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES OF NORTHERN IRELAND. COSGRAVE REPORTEDLY AGREED TO INTRODUCE LEGISLATION IN NEXT PARLIAMENT SESSION TO EFFECT COMMON LAW ENFORCEMENT EFFORT AGAINST EXTREMIST ELEMENTS IN BOTH REPUBLIC AND ULSTER (MHG FOR SOME TIME HAS BEEN PREPARED TO INTRODUCE COMPLEMENTARY LEGISLATION IN WESTMINSTER). THIS WAS PART OF ORIGINAL SUNNINGDALE PACKAGE. BOTH GOVERNMENTS ALSO AGREED TO CONVENE JOINT MEETING ON SECURITY MATTERS SHORTLY. THE MILITARY, HOWEVER, WILL NOT ATTEND THIS MEETING.

2. NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE UNDERSECRETARY TREVELYAN
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CONFIRMED SUBSTANCE OF PRESS ACCOUNTS IN CONVERSATION

WITH EMBOFF, ADDING THAT HMG WAS EXTREMELY PLEASED WITH RESULTS. ACCORDING TO TREVELYAN, SECURITY OFFICIALS WILL MEET IN DUBLIN LATE NEXT WEEK. DATE AND LOCATION OF MEETING WILL NOT BE ANNOUNCED BEFOREHAND BECAUSE OF SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS.

3. COMMENT: WILSON/COSGRAVE MEETING APPEARS TO BE MOST PROMISING EVENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND AFFAIRS IN RECENT MONTHS, AND CERTAINLY SINCE FALL OF NORTHERN IRELAND EXECUTIVE. HMG, WHILE NOT SANGUINE ABOUT SHORT TERM PROSPECTS FOR SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN NORTHERN IRELAND SITUATION, BELIEVES MEETING WAS VERY PRODUCTIVE. ON SECURITY SIDE, ANGLO-IRISH MEETING NEXT WEEK SHOULD REDUCE TENSION BETWEEN UK AND IRISH SECURITY FORCES IN FRONTIER AREA, OPEN THE WAY FOR DIRECT CONTACT AND COOPERATION BETWEEN UNIFORMED PUBLIC SECURITY FORCES ON BOTH SIDES (THOUGH SUCH COOPERATION REPORTEDLY WOULD BE POLITICALLY DIFFICULT FOR COSGRAVE GOVERNMENT) AND ENHANCE PROSPECTS FOR MORE EFFECTIVE CONTROL OF EXTREMIST ELEMENTS, EVEN WITHOUT COMMON LAW ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION. HMG REGARDS COSGRAVE COMMITMENT TO INTRODUCE COMMON LAW ENFORCEMENT LEGISLATION AS HARD EVIDENCE OR IRISH GOOD FAITH AND AS AN ACT OF POLITICAL COURAGE. SUCH WOULD APPEAR TO BE THE CASE FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE. SOHM

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